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Chapter 2

***“Most public schools and their communities conduct strong school–and-community relations that typify the two-way symmetric model.”***

The school-and-community relations model is fairly new method introduced in the early twentieth century initially as Publicity to make school related information available to the public. In time, the publicity model evolved and redefined to meet the increasing needs of the public that were deemed more appropriate which later developed into school-and-community relations model. However, despite the inclusion of modified versions of conveying public information there are four types of practices that are currently being used by schools across the nation: press agentry-publicity, public information, two-way asymmetric, and two-way symmetric.

Press agentry-publicity and public information both serve the sole purpose of disseminating information to the public while the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric on retrieving feedback in order to evaluate their communications with the public. Currently, the most popular type of relations happening in the nation is public information ranking at fifty percent while two-way symmetric comes in a fifteen percent. The common factor between all these types of relation is that the public is in fact receiving school information.

I believe that the latter, two-way symmetric is the least utilized method of communicating with the public because it is the most time consuming, work driven and may even have budget impacts. Two-way symmetric relations acts as a “go between” communicator between the school and the public. This requires effort on part of the administration to seek out public feedback, evaluate and disseminate findings among staff, which calls for modifications or impact on the school. Then the process repeats. This type of school-and-community relations is quite an undertaking for any school. So the low percentage of schools using this method makes most sense. While two-way symmetric is maybe the most appropriate method of establishing the most effective type of public relations it is not always the easiest. For some schools public information may just make more sense for they way they are structured.